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URBAN DISTRICT OF CONSETT.

Interim Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year  
1943.

To the Chairman and Members of the Consett Urban District Council:-

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting this interim report and in recording the satisfactory state as recorded in the "statistics" of the health of the district. This is all the more gratifying as in the fifth year of war much worse could have befallen us. No doubt most of us are feeling the strain and irksomeness of the various restrictions, but so far as the figures go, with which we are immediately concerned these matters are not taken into account.

Public Health Work has been carried on as well as conditions have permitted and I think we can honestly say, better than was anticipated at the beginning of the war.

My thanks are due to all members of your Health Staff and to the Officials and Staff of other Departments whose help has always been readily forthcoming in the Public Interest. The Chairman and Members of the Council along with your Clerk have given every encouragement to the work of the Department for which I am grateful.

At the time of writing there seems hope of an early termination of war conditions when we can all concentrate on helping to make the future better and brighter for those who return after the upheaval of the last few years.

I am,  
Sir. Chairman and Gentlemen,

J.G. WALKER,

Medical Officer of Health.



6th September, 1944.

Health Department,  
Council Offices,  
London.



CONSETT URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Interim Report of the Medical Officer of Health for  
Year ending December 31st 1943.

Summary of General & Vital Statistics.

Area in Acres	9,840
Population (Census 1931)	38,046
Population (Mid-year 1943)	35,320
Number of Inhabited Houses according to rate books	10,905
Unreduced rateable value	£ 197,391
Reduced rateable value	£ 158,776
Sum represented by a penny rate	£ 590
Births during the year	602
Birth-rate	17.0
Deaths during the year	432
Crude death-rate	12.2
Infantile mortality rate	46.5
Tuberculosis death-rate	0.67
Pulmonary tuberculosis death-rate	0.61
Non-pulmonary tuberculosis death-rate	0.06
Zymotic death-rate	0.14

Special Causes of Sickness.

There were no special causes of sickness during the year.

Extracts from Vital Statistics.

	Total	M.	F.	Birth-rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population - 17.0
Live Births (Legitimate	571	272	299	)
Births (Illegitimate	31	12	19	)
Total Live Births )				
Legitimate & )	602			
Illegitimate )				
Still Births (Legitimate	32	14	18	) Rate per 1,000 total (Live
Births (Illegitimate	2	2	Nil	) & Still) births 53.4
Deaths from all Causes	432	217	215	) Deathrate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population 12.2
Deaths from Puerperal Causes				
No. 29 Puerperal Sepsis	1			) Rate per 1,000 total (Live
No. 30 Other Puerperal Causes	Nil			) & Still) births 1.5
Deaths of infants under one year of age:-				
All infants per 1,000 live births				46.5
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births				47.2
Illegitimate " " " illegitimate " "				32.2
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)				48
" " Measles				Nil
" " Whooping Cough				Nil
" " Diarrhoea (under 2 years)				2
Population estimated by the Registrar General				35,320



Causes of Death in Consett Urban District  
1943.

Causes of Death.	Males	Females
All causes:-	217	215
1. Typhoid and para-typhoid fevers	-	-
2. Cerebro-spinal fever	-	2
3. Scarlet Fever	1	-
4. Whooping Cough	-	-
5. Diphtheria	1	1
6. Tuberculosis of respiratory system	10	12
7. Other forms of Tuberculosis	1	1
8. Syphilitic Diseases	1	0
9. Influenza	5	3
10. Measles	-	-
11. Acute Polio-myelitis and polio-encephalitis	-	-
12. Acute infantile encephalitis	-	1
13. Cancer of Buccal cavity )	1	-
"    " uterus     )	-	4
14. "    " Stomach and duodenum	7	3
15. "    " breast	-	3
16. "    " all other sites	18	11
17. Diabetes	4	2
18. Inter-cranial vascular lesions	23	38
19. Heart disease	48	54
20. Other diseases of circulatory system	2	2
21. Bronchitis	14	8
22. Pneumonia	7	10
23. Other respiratory diseases	5	5
24. Ulcer of Stomach or duodenum	3	1
25. Diarrhoea under 2 years	1	1
26. Appendicitis	-	-
27. Other digestive diseases	3	6
28. Nephritis	6	7
29. Puerperal and post-abortion sepsis	-	1
30. Other maternal causes	-	-
31. Premature birth	3	2
32. Congenital malformity, birth injuries etc.	6	7
33. Suicide	1	-
34. Road traffic accidents	-	3
35. Other violent causes	5	3
36. All other causes	41	24

Deaths from the Principal Infectious Diseases.

Measles	0
Whooping Cough	0
Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	2
Smallpox	0
Scarlet Fever	1
Diphtheria	2
Fever (enteric, typhus etc.)	0
Total	5



Zymotic Death-rate per 1,000 population	0.14
" " for the Administrative County	0.28

The rate is lower than the rate (0.24) last year, the decrease being accounted for by the decreased number of deaths in children under two years from diarrhoea.

#### Infant Mortality Rate.

There were 28 deaths of infants under one year of age compared with 40 last year, which gives an infant mortality rate of 46.5 the lowest on record.

Infant Mortality Rate	Consett Urban District	46.5
" " "	Administrative County	61.0
" " "	England & Wales	48
" " "	148 Towns with population 25,000 to 50,000	46

#### General Provisions of Health Services in the Area.

##### Staff of the Public Health Department:-

- (a) Medical Officer of Health, John G. Walker, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.  
Offices and duties:- Whole-time Medical Officer of Health for the joint areas of the Consett Urban and Lanchester Rural District Councils in accordance with the Memorandum on the duties of Medical Officers of Health and the Sanitary Officers Order 1935.
- (b) Chief Sanitary Inspector:- F. Stringfellow.  
Certificate of R.S.I. for Sanitary Inspectors.  
Certificate of R.S.I. for Meat & Food Inspectors.
- (c) Additional Sanitary Inspectors:-  
H. Walton, Certificate of S.I.B. and Meat Certificate.  
W. Telford, " " " " "
- (d) Shops Inspector:- R.P. Jope.  
Clerical Staff:- Clerk - Miss. P.E. Barrow.  
Junior Clerk (Temporary) T.E. Hodgson.  
Temporary Clerks - Civil Defence:-  
Mrs. H.S. Ridley. Mr. W.L. Armstrong.

The Health Services available in the area are detailed in the report for 1938, to which reference should be made for further information.

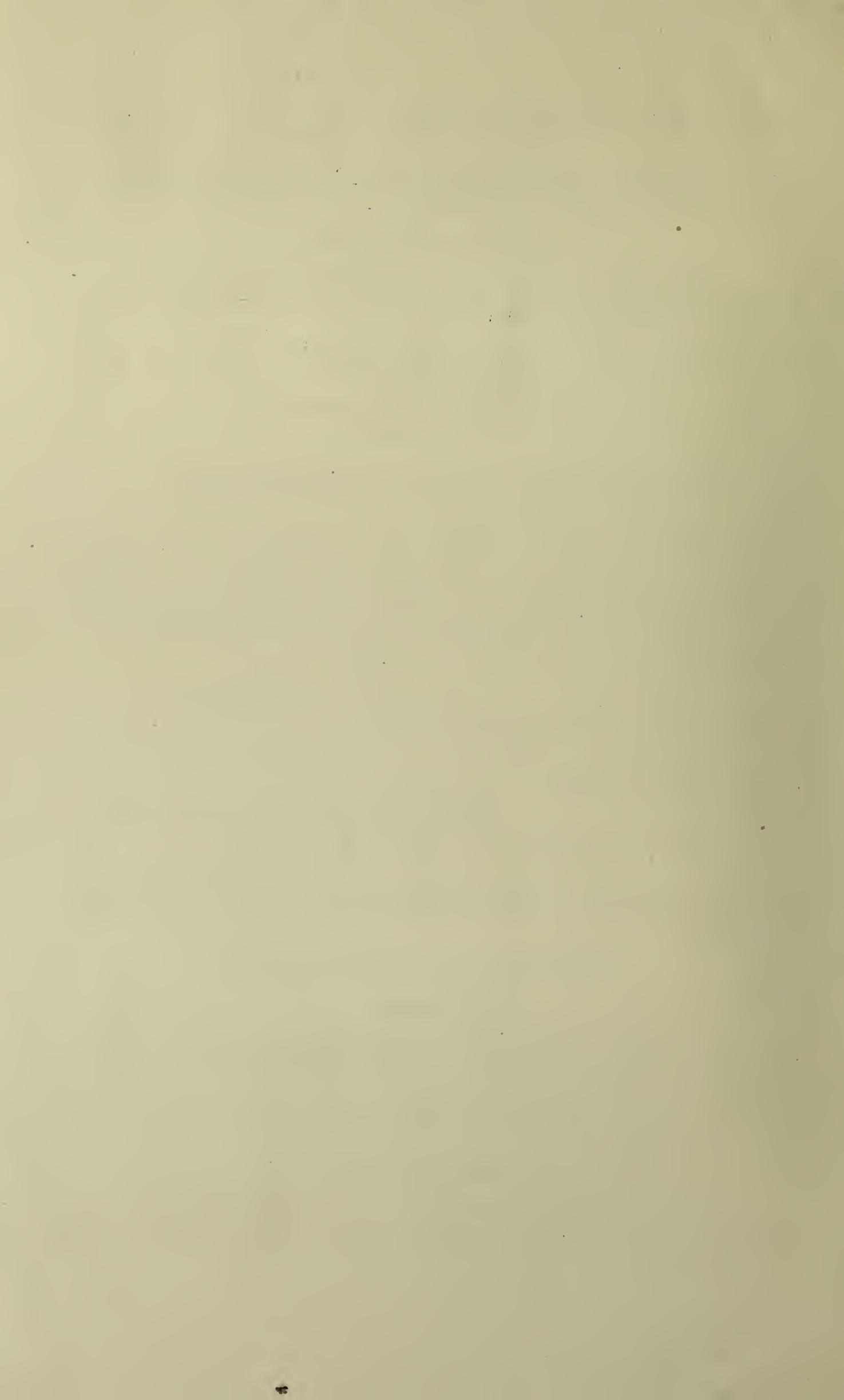
#### Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

##### Water Supply.

The public water supply proved ample throughout the year. The Durham County Water Board have control and following considerable negotiations a piped supply was provided to Long Close Cottage completing the whole of this small area which has been for some time without a proper and sufficient water supply. In addition, No. 10, Backstone Burn was connected to the public main.

##### Drainage & Sewerage.

Ordinary maintenance work has been carried out and the new disposal works continue to function satisfactorily. The sewer in Drift Street was diverted to ease pressure at this point and prevent flooding.



### Closet Accommodation.

The position is very little changed and at the end of the year the total accommodation in the area was as follows:-

Water closets	9,804
Ash closets	607
Ashpit privies	492

### Public Cleansing.

In the old areas of Consett and Benfieldside this work is carried out by direct labour, the remaining part of the district being cleansed by contractors. A number of tips in various parts of the area are used as disposal points. As opportunity permits, it will be a definite improvement to provide transport and labour under the Council's direct control throughout the whole area.

### Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

The following table gives some details of work done under the various headings for the year 1943:-

Public Health Acts etc.	Informal Notices	Formal Notices	Nuisances abated after notice.
Dwelling houses (Foul conditions)	6	-	6
(Structural Defects)	223	3	151
(Overcrowding)	8	-	3
Dairies & Milkshops	3	-	3
Cowsheds	23	-	20
Bakchouses	3	-	2
Slaughterhouses	2	-	2
Ashpits & Privies	23	-	19
Deposits of refuse and manure	8	-	8
Water closets	8	-	8
Drainage Faults	80	-	80
Water supply	4	-	2
Pigsties	2	-	2
Animals improperly kept	1	-	1
Other Nuisances	2	-	2
 Totals	394	3	309

### Precautions against Infectious Diseases.

Houses visited following infectious diseases and disinfectants etc. supplied	91
Lots of infectious bedding stoved or destroyed	86
Library and salvaged books disinfected	546
Schools disinfected	2

### Factories Act 1937.

Fifty-three inspections were made and in four cases the attention of owners was directed to breaches of the requirements. The following defects were remedied at our request:-

Separate accommodation for sexes	1
Additional closet accommodation	1
Defective water closets	1
Accumulation of refuse	1



### Shops Act 1934.

Sixty-one visits were made to shops and in a few cases improvements were carried out at our request.

Defective water closet accommodation	2
Drainage defects	3
Accumulation of refuse	3

### Schools.

In two cases various classrooms were disinfected at the request of the Education Authority. No school was closed on account of infectious disease.

### Housing.

In common with other parts of the country the housing shortage is acute and until this position is overcome it will be impossible to deal with defective housing conditions except on the most restricted lines. Many houses which could be made fit have suffered during the war from lack of repairs and in some cases following notices, owners have appealed to us for assistance in getting the necessary work completed.

### Unfit Houses.

Number of separate tenements in respect of which Closing Orders were made	1
Number of houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	Nil
Number of dwelling houses in respect of which the owners have given undertakings not to use the houses for human habitation	Nil
Number of houses actually demolished	34
Number of separate tenements in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or rooms having been rendered fit	Nil

The thirty-four houses demolished formed part of clearance areas and properties on which demolition orders had been made prior to the war. It is satisfactory to note that every occupier has been rehoused from unfit properties officially dealt with by the Council. There remain in various parts of the area eighty-two vacated condemned houses. The great majority of these are in ruinous state, and their complete clearance would make a very great improvement.

### Overcrowding.

Only eight cases were dealt with, five of these being in families which had grown to an overcrowded state. Three cases were provided with sufficient new accommodation, two in houses controlled by the Council and one private.

### Milk Supplies.

The following premises and persons were registered under the Milk & Dairies Order 1926 and Milk Designation Order 1936:-

Cowkeepers	56
Farms registered as Dairies	56
Other registered Dairies	25
Wholesale producers only	17
Retail purveyors of milk in the area	65
Retail purveyors of milk from other areas	14
Accredited producers	18
Tuberculin Tested Milk producers	1



During the year under review, one hundred and fifty-nine visits of inspection were made to Cowsheds and Dairies. Approximately one in three producers have been granted licences under the Milk Designation Order 1936. Alterations and improvements were carried out at Townhead Farm, Broomhill Glebe Farm, Broomhill Farm, Low Bradley Farm and Hagg Farm. The occupier of the last named premises was granted a licence to produce Tuberculin Tested milk, being the first in your Council's area to reach this stage. A producer of similar milk from an adjoining area retails in the district. There is in addition one supplementary licence in force for the distribution of Pasteurised milk and two Dealer's licences to sell similar milk. Five samples were taken for analysis, two of which were unsatisfactory. The results were discussed with the producers concerned and instructions given regarding the phases of the work requiring special attention.

#### Meat & Other Foods.

The two Government controlled slaughter-houses were in operation throughout the year, supplies of meat being directed from these premises to the Lanchester, Rural and Consett Urban areas. A hundred per cent examination was again attained with special attention being given to casualty animals. The various types of animals dealt with are as set out below:-

Bulls	72
Bullocks	421
Cows	598
Heifers	706
Calves	900
Pigs	117
Sheep	<u>8,607</u>
Total	11,481

Altogether 298 animals described as casualties were brought in for slaughter including nine cows directed by the Ministry of Agriculture's Veterinary Officers under the Tuberculosis Order 1938.

Bulls	6
Bullocks	17
Cows	120
Heifers	23
Calves	27
Pigs	18
Sheep	<u>87</u>
Total	298

Diseased or otherwise unsound Meat. A complete statement for the year is attached, giving particulars of animal carcasses and organs etc. found on inspection to be diseased or otherwise unfit for human consumption. This material is collected weekly and processed for various uses other than human food by arrangement with the Government control. The following table gives details of the 1,857 cattle examined and the percentage affected by Tuberculosis:-



## CONSETT URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Total Carcasses, etc. found to be unfit for human consumption during the year 1943



	Bulls	Bullocks	Heifers	Cows
Number inspected	72	421	766	598
<b>TUBERCULOSIS.</b>				
Whole carcases condemned	Nil	1	7	34
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	8	52	85	212
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	11.1	12.58	12.0	41.14

Of the total 1,857 cattle, 21.48% were found to be affected with Tuberculosis in more or less degree.

Imported Meat. The following foodstuffs were distributed to the trade in addition to home grown produce:-

Quarters of Beef	2,915
Cases of Pork Loins	2,247
Sides of Veal	267
Sheep & Lambs	27,267
Cases or Pork Butts	684
Corned Beef (12 ozs.)	56,587 tins
do. (6 lb.)	22,650 tins

Private Slaughtering. Fifty seven pigs were inspected following slaughter for home consumption in various parts of the district.

Other Foods. Fish, fruit, vegetables and provisions etc. found to be unsound at retail shops and other depots:-

Tinned Goods.

Beefs	358	Tins
Vegetables	294	"
Milk	276	"
Fruit	109	"
Fish	99	"
Soups	41	"
Jam	12	"

Various Foods.

Eggs	181
Frozen Eggs	60 lbs.
Bacon	32 "
Ham	36 "
Cheese	49 "
Butter	10 "
Sugar	32 "
Raisins	19 "
Prunes	11 "
Sausage Meat	7 "
Rusks	31 Pkts.

Bottled Goods.

Various Jams	15
Horse radish Cream	27
Pickles & Chutney	7

Fish.

Codlings	140 lbs.
Kippers	114 "
Fish Cakes	219

Food & Drugs Act 1938.

A total of one hundred and forty-seven inspections were made of premises where foodstuffs are prepared. In six cases, unsatisfactory features were remedied at our request.



Prevalence of and Control over Infectious and Other Diseases.

There were 543 notifications of Infectious Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) compared with 551 in 1942. Measles and Whooping Cough were again prevalent and accounted for 363 cases of the 543. Compared with the total of 1,586 notifications in 1940, we can be satisfied with such low returns in the fifth year of war. The following table shows the number of cases notified and the numbers admitted either to Isolation Hospitals or already in an Institution:-

Disease	Number of Notifications.	Number admitted to Hospital.
Scarlet Fever	62	43
Diphtheria	29	23
Erysipelas	14	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1	1
Puerperal Pyrexia	3	1
Pneumonia	68	3
Cerebro-spinal Fever	3	3
Measles	291	-
Whooping Cough	72	-
Totals	543	74

Non-civilian cases are not included in these figures.

Scarlet Fever. There was a decline in cases compared with 1942, 62 cases against 83. The type of disease was mild and generally free from complications. There were no deaths. About 31% of the cases were successfully treated at home with no ill effects and "return" cases were absent.

Diphtheria. There were 29 cases notified, seven of these were non-residents. Of the 22 residents contracting this disease, five were adults and 17 were children under 15 years of age, 3 of whom were immunised and 14 non-immunised. There were 2 deaths, both in non-immunised children. The effect of the immunisation campaign is now becoming apparent. The following figures illustrate the cases and deaths since 1927 in the areas not constituting Consett Urban District. Those prior to 1937 are composite figures based on the separate districts concerned as far as available records permit.

Years	Cases Notified.	Deaths
1927	95	9
1928	129	11
1929	140	6
1930	141	5
1931	49	2
1932	60	2
1933	183	11
1934	234	16
1935	150	15
1936	164	16
1937	180	15
1938	154	14
1939	73	11
1940	10	5
1941	10	1
1942	13	2
1943	22	2



It will be noted that there is a tendency towards cycles each reaching its highest point in the fourth year e.g. 1930 - 141 cases, 1934 - 234 cases, 1938 - 154 cases (immunisation began in 1937) and 1942 - 13 cases or less cases than we had deaths in each year 1934-1938. It could reasonably have been expected from previous experience that something between 150 and 250 cases would have occurred in 1942 instead of the actual figure of 13. The only new factor that has been at work to make this difference is "Immunisation". There have been 48 fatal cases since 1937, all of these with one doubtful exception were in non-immunised cases.

Diphtheria Immunisation Campaign. The results of the advertising campaign - through press, cinema, leaflets etc. were good and a further 1,098 children under 15 years of age received two injections of Alum Precipitated Toxoid during 1943, 619 of these were under 5 years of age and 479 between 5 and 15 years of age. The whole register of immunised children was revised to June 30th 1944 by removing children's names who had attained 15 years of age and over and transferring those who had become 5 + years to their proper age group. The figures to June 30th 1944 were:-

Under 5 years	immunised	1,371	-	45.4%
5 - 15 "	"	5,097	-	84.3%

This is equal to a figure of 71.3% of all children under 15 years of age in your district.

Scabies. The work commenced in June 1942 was continued throughout the year and during 1943, 423 cases and 462 contacts were treated. Of these, 49 were re-infestations. These figures involve 167 separate families. The totals dealt with since June 1942 are 867 cases and 849 contacts. There is reason to believe that there is more co-operation on the part of the public than during the early stages of this campaign.

Venereal Diseases. The interest of the Council in this matter was furthered during the year by their provision of booklets etc. on the subject to appropriate groups and by addresses given by the Medical Officer of Health to suitable audiences among Teachers, Womens Institutes, Civil Defence Workers, Youth Organisations etc.

Tuberculosis. The number of new notifications during 1943 was 43. The position is shown in the following table, which gives the notifications etc. since 1938:-

Year	Total Notif- ications.	Pulmon- ary.	Non-pul- monary.	Deaths.	Recover- ed.	Removed from area.
1938	49	23	26	27	13	6
1939	49	35	14	23	-	4
1940	39	25	14	13	10	6
1941	39	26	13	18	10	7
1942	39	17	22	12	4	7
1943	43	31	12	24	3	8
Totals	258	157	101	117	40	38

The state of the register at the beginning of 1938 was 99 pulmonary and 85 non-pulmonary cases, at the end of 1943 the corresponding figures were 137 and 119.

The housing of tubercular families has received considerable attention



in your district for many years, and whilst war conditions have slowed up the process of re-housing, owing to the cessation of building, a number of families in bad circumstances have been dealt with and the Housing Department provided with a list of suitable cases for re-housing as circumstances permit. Five families were so dealt with in 1943.

